

RADIOISOTOPE RENOGRAPHY. By Chester C. Winter, M.D., F.A.C.S. (Pp. 184; figs. 144. 72s.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1963.

DR. Winter speaks with authority on this relatively new method of investigation, as he has been concerned in its development from almost the beginning. He gives a clear account of the technique, dealing with equipment, choice of radioactive test agent, and interpretation of renograms. He has included many examples of renograms, with clear explanations of their interpretations.

He compares the relative merits of renal function tests by an arbitrary score based on "obtainability" of desired information, degree of difficulty of performance of the test, risk involved, age of patient, etc. The choice of tests must always be related to the needs of the individual patient and the facilities available, and such a comparison cannot be valid. It is not necessary to make a case for radioactive renograms based on such a comparison, and these tables add nothing to the usefulness of the book.

The radioactive renogram can be easily and rapidly carried out with little discomfort to the patient. The amount of radiation to which the patient is exposed is extremely small, although no amount is stated, and the tests can be repeated at short intervals to follow changes in the patient's condition. No side effects have been encountered in a large number of patients. Each kidney is tested separately. A specific pattern occurs in obstructive lesions, which reverts to normal after the relief of the obstruction. Unfortunately, this pattern is also found in upper urinary tract stasis in its widest sense, such as polycystic disease or even in severe dehydration. In fact, the limitation of the method is that renograms are not pathognomonic of disease states and must be interpreted in the light of information collected in other ways, such as from intravenous pyelograms. It appears to be a useful additional test in hypertensive patients suspected of renal artery stenosis, although it cannot replace arterography. One place where the method appears to be specially useful is in the diagnosis of ureteric reflux.

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CLINICAL GENODERMATOLOGY. By Thomas Butterworth, A.B., M.D., Med.Sc.M., and Lyon P. Streaun, D.D.S., M.Sc., Ph.D. (Pp. 221; figs. 99. 108s.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1963.

THIS compact, well produced little book deals methodically with the majority of those dermatoses which have a genetic background. The authors have had the advantage of many years' observation of patients at the Pennhurst State School in Pennsylvania, "where there are hundreds of patients with various congenital abnormalities."

There is an introduction by Professor James E. Wright who deals with the general aspects of genetics in a simple and straightforward manner. There then follows fourteen chapters in which the various skin disturbances, such as pigmentation, keratinisation, hair, etc., as seen in the so-called genodermatoses, are dealt with in a simple manner. A few references, not perhaps always very well chosen, are appended for each disease. The accounts are clearly written and easily understood, but tend at times to be somewhat abbreviated although, perhaps, the authors have not intended that the book should be used for any research or investigative study. It is certainly very helpful to find simple and clear accounts of many of the very rare inherited abnormalities of the skin contained in one small book, and no doubt those preparing lectures for both undergraduate and postgraduate students will find this book invaluable. The authors wisely, however, have not attempted to provide a thesis on the subject which would compare with the old and now out-of-date, but well loved, textbook by Cockayne. They have also wisely reduced the section on psoriasis to one short paragraph.

The photographs are all in black and white and contain ninety-nine figures but, in fact, many of these figures include as many as six different photographs. All these photographs are excellent.

This book then will be useful to those preparing lectures, to postgraduates working for higher degrees in general medicine and surgery and to family doctors and students who want a quick and brief reference to some rare condition which they have just seen and are unlikely to see often again.